

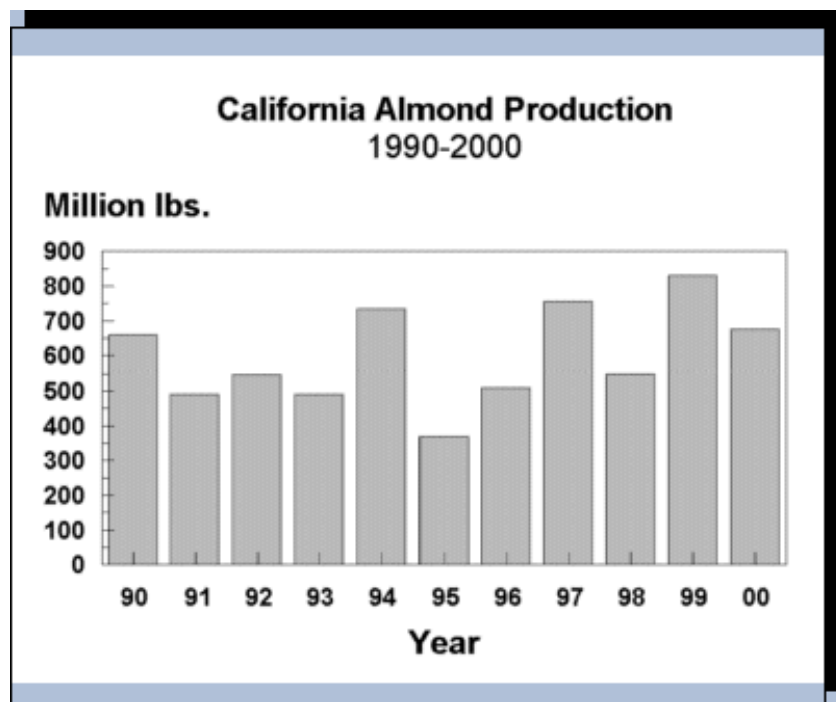
CALIFORNIA'S CROP PRODUCTION REPORT

Released: May 12, 2000

California's **almond production** is expected to be 675 million pounds in 2000, down 19% from last year's record crop of 830 million pounds. Bearing acres are estimated at 500,000 acres.

The forecast is based on calls made to a sample of almond growers from April 26 - May 3. Responses were received from 300 growers, of which 270 were usable. The acreage from the usable reports accounted for 20% of the total bearing acreage.

The 2000 season began with growers anticipating a lighter set after the record-setting crop of last year. The set has been quite variable with some varieties having a heavy set, while others were very light. Rain did hamper the bloom in some areas, but warm temperatures in April helped get the crop back on track. The trees look good with no damage from insects or disease reported. However, growers are concerned that rain throughout northern California on May 6-8 could increase the chance for disease. Yields are expected to be down 22 percent from last year. The crop is about two weeks ahead of last year and slightly ahead of normal.



The 2000 **Freestone peach** crop is forecast at 800 million pounds, up 6% from 1999. The current Freestone crop is running ahead of last year by at least two weeks. Weather conditions have been near ideal for the peach crop. Favorable weather, comprising a wet spring and adequate chilling hours, has provided a sound fruit set, good sizing, and good quality.

The 2000 **Clingstone peach** crop is forecast at 1,100 million pounds, up 4% from last year. Weather conditions have been nearly perfect for Clingstone peaches. The wet spring combined with adequate chilling hours provided a good fruit set and strongly promoted fruit growth and quality.

Production forecasts are released on a monthly basis and do not reflect final production estimates. The next production forecast will be issued June 9, 2000.